

2016

**NIST Child Care Center
Parent Handbook**



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Director

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WELCOME TO THE NIST CHILD CARE CENTER (NIST CCC)

Welcome to the NIST Child Care Center! Whether you are a mom, dad or guardian, you want your child to have a loving, caring, wholesome environment in which to play and learn. We understand the need to provide quality child care at a reasonable price and are excited to offer this service to the NIST community. We offer options for full-time or part-time child care, kindergarten, before and after school care, Montgomery County Public School closings, and snow days where space available.

All federal government employees and NIST Associates with children or grandchildren ages six weeks through 5th grade are eligible to enroll their children in the Center for various programs. The Center admits children of any race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin. Children of all abilities are welcome at our center. We encourage para-professionals and therapists to assist children as needed. We do ask that if a child does have an IEP or IFSP you supply the forms to the center to assist in our planning for your child. We believe that finances should not prevent you from placing your little pea in our care and scholarship assistance is available to qualifying families.

Our mission is to encourage and promote the total social, physical, emotional, and academic development of each child in a safe, nurturing and supportive learning environment.

HISTORY OF THE NIST CHILD CARE CENTER

The NIST Child Care Center (NIST CCC) is on the campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Gaithersburg, MD. It is operated as a non-profit organization that provides a service for children of federal government employees and NIST Associates.

The NIST CCC has been in operation, and licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care, since September 1983. The Center's full-day kindergarten program, established in 1995, is approved as a non-public school by the Maryland State Department of Education.

The CCC is an independent organization that operates on the NIST campus through a Memorandum of Agreement between NIST management and the NIST Child Care Association (CCA). NIST management is not involved in the Child Care Association or the policies and practices of the CCC, its staff or the Association's Board of Directors.

GOVERNANCE

The policies of the NIST CCC are governed by the NIST Child Care Association (CCA) Board of Directors. The CCA is the business entity that manages the non-profit affairs of the Child Care Center.

The NIST CCA Board of Directors consists of a minimum of eight elected members, an accounts bookkeeper, and the NIST CCC Director. Elected board members serve a 2 year term, with elections for a minimum of four seats on the board being held every year.

PHILOSOPHY

The NIST CCC is designed to provide a developmentally appropriate program for children ages 6 weeks through school age. There is general agreement among experts that a good program for young children must be developmentally appropriate, but what exactly does this mean? According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), this means that the quality of the program is defined in large measure by the extent to which the environment, activities, and interactions are rooted in the teacher's understanding of developmental stages and knowledge of each child. The decisions teachers make in planning the curriculum and in reacting spontaneously to what happens each day are based on knowledge of typical child development and what is known about each child's interests, abilities, needs and background.

At the NIST CCC, we know and understand that children learn best through interaction with their peers and play. Infants thrive on interaction. Frequent physical contact and thoughtful response to infant signals is crucial in the development of a trusting and secure relationship with an infant in the center. Opportunities for sensory and gross motor activities are introduced to each infant according to their own developmental pace. Play is the serious work of the young child. We value and encourage play, knowing how central it is to each child's development. Young children learn best by "doing". Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world we live in. Our carefully prepared environment provides the child with the opportunity to learn "hands-on", moving from the concrete to more abstract concept development.

Our program offers a balance between child-initiated and teacher directed activities and is designed to stimulate and challenge the child to try new roles, experiment with ideas and materials and solve real problems. It is the process rather than the product, the means rather than the end, and the availability of opportunities in which each child can experience success which are emphasized.

The NIST Child Care Center provides a warm, safe and supportive environment that provides opportunity and challenge, and individual success and growth.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The NIST Child Care Center is committed to:

- following the developmentally appropriate guidelines established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the State of Maryland Office of Child Care Regulations;
- providing a healthy, safe and secure environment for children;
- encouraging each child in his/her developmental growth by providing an environment that encourages learning through action, inquiry and exploration;
- assisting each child to gain better control and understanding of his/her body through interaction with the environment, materials, and equipment;
- helping each child develop language skills, which will enable expression of thoughts and feelings as well as an opportunity to increase knowledge;
- promoting a good self-image in each child by providing an environment that encourages independence, decision making, and problem solving;
- fostering an appreciation for the ethnic and cultural diversity of its families and its community; discrimination, in any form, will not be tolerated; and
- promoting a cooperative, informative, and respectful relationship with families. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation, in any form, by staff, families, or children will not be tolerated.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Obtain an application from the Center Director or Assistant Director or at the Center's webpage (<http://www.nist.gov/ccc/>). Complete the application. A processing fee must be included and submitted to the Center Director or Assistant Directors. Applications may be presented in person or can be mailed to 100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 1915, Gaithersburg, MD 20899.

In cases where an immediate vacancy in an age-appropriate classroom is not available, the child's name is added to the wait list. A completed application and the processing fee must be submitted in order for a child's name to be placed on our wait list.

Please note: Registration requires a "due date". Parents are responsible for notifying the center once the birth has occurred to update the registration with the name and birth date. Parents who indicate they are adopting a child will be assigned a date of application that is on inactive status until at least ten months before the desired date of enrollment.

Waiting List

The Center Director maintains the waiting list. The date of registration and a priority category are entered on the waiting list with the child's name and birth date or due date. The wait time for a child care space is largely dependent on the age of the child and priority category. Often, a family can be on the waitlist for a year or more.

Children are offered spaces according to the following priority categories:

- A. Children (dependents) of Federal NIST employees
- B. Children (dependents) of non-NIST Federal employees
- C. Children (dependents) of NIST Associates
- D. Children with a grandparent, aunt or uncle who is a Federal NIST employee

The priority category is updated if the status of the parent (guardian) or sponsoring relative changes with time. Parents (guardians) or sponsoring relative must notify the Center Director if their status impacts the priority category of the child for the Center Director to modify the priority category for the child on the waiting list. Parents (guardians) or sponsoring relative must demonstrate proof of status for the appropriate priority category at the time you are contacted to fill a vacancy in the Center.

The child's name will be removed from the waiting list if (1) the child becomes enrolled at the Center, (2) the parent/guardian of the child informs the Center Director that they no longer seek enrollment at the Center, or (3) the child enters first grade. A child's placement on the waiting list is not changed in the event that a vacancy is offered but not accepted.

NIST has implemented the revised priority order in order to comply with Title 40 of the U.S. Code, Section 590b (2007), which authorizes federal agencies to establish child care centers for federal families and also requires that at least 50 percent of the children enrolled must be children of federal employees.

Class Vacancies – Program Opportunities

The NIST Child Care Center accepts children from 6 weeks of age through completion of fifth grade age (i.e., Summer Camp and Before/After School Care) as spaces become available year round. The majority of class vacancies do however become available at the beginning of a new school year, which typically begins on a Monday in late August or early September.

Filling Class Vacancies – Priority Setting

Currently enrolled children have the first opportunity for filling class vacancies. Children registered on the wait list fill class vacancies not filled by currently enrolled children. The decision to move a child from classroom to classroom follows the CCC's progression policy outlined below.

Class Vacancies Filled by Currently Enrolled Children

For class vacancies that become available at the start or during the school year, the Center Director has the option of setting an end date for responses from parents on whether their currently enrolled child will be filling the available class vacancy. If an end date is specified, the preferential treatment towards currently enrolled children is not guaranteed once the end date has passed.

Class Progression Policy

It is the policy of the NIST CCC to progress children through the Center's classrooms using the child's date of birth as the sole criterion except for transitions between the infant rooms, which is based on mobility. The Center Director will issue a survey in the spring of each year to determine enrollment and class assignments for the upcoming school year with the most readily available information, which is subject to change depending on individual circumstances. Parents should understand that enrollment at the Center is fluid and that circumstances may prevent a child from getting into a desired classroom. However, the Center's curriculum and space is flexible enough to accommodate the age ranges that may be placed in any one classroom, depending on enrollment.

The majority of children will progress to the next age appropriate class as the "new school year" begins on the Monday in late August or early September, which coincides with the first week of school for Montgomery County Public Schools.

Transitions can happen at other times of the year when space becomes available. We strive to keep primary care groups together, but cannot guarantee that all children will stay together throughout the years due to space availability. We also cannot guarantee a space as soon as your child is chronologically ready to move to the next older program. Fees are associated to the room your child is assigned, and not for the chronological age.

As your child ages, the child to teacher ratio increases in each classroom. There is always an oldest and a youngest in each classroom. Each classroom is able to meet the needs of the oldest and the youngest members of the group because our program works with the children as individuals.

NIST CCC Kindergarten Program

The Center Director will hold an annual informational meeting to introduce parents to our kindergarten program. The meeting will be scheduled no later than March 31st each year. A three-week priority registration is offered to children currently enrolled in the NIST CCC. Registration for children not currently enrolled at the NIST CCC follows the announced priority registration period. If the number of children that are registered (including both currently enrolled and waiting list) at the end of the initial three-week registration period exceeds the number of available vacancies, then a lottery will be used (as described below) to rank order these requests. If enrollment is not full after three week priority period, positions for the new school year will be filled on a first applied, first served basis.

The lottery proceeds as follows: The names of all age-eligible children from Category “A” are placed in a hat and withdrawn one at a time. As each name is drawn, it is recorded on a list in the order withdrawn. The lottery process is repeated for age-eligible children from Category “B”, with the names being added below those children from Category “A”. The process is repeated for children from category “C” and followed by children from category “D”. Vacancies for the new school year are offered based on the lottery’s rank ordering. Once the new school year begins, however, any new vacancies that become available are filled based on the priority category and registration date criteria described above.

NIST CCC Summer Camp

The Summer Camp offers a variety of activities developed around weekly themes to include arts and crafts, games, photo journals, indoor/outdoor play, to an array of field trips or bi-weekly visits to our local financial institution to discuss the principles of a savings account.

Registration and participation in the Summer Camp session(s) is on a first applied, first served basis. Specific information regarding Summer Camp program registration is published early in December of the preceding year. Priority summer camp registration for students currently enrolled at the center starts immediately after the information is published and continues until the close of business the day before open registration begins. Open registration for the remaining summer camp slots is typically scheduled in early January with a 7:30 am start time. Parents of children not currently enrolled at NIST CCC, but have interest in the Summer Camp program, should contact the Center to be put on the list to receive the camp information by email prior to the early December publication.

The summer camp program is typically divided into two week sessions and a final one week session contingent on the Montgomery County Public School summer recess. An activity fee is assessed for each session and must be paid at the time of registration to reserve the session. Activity fees are collected at this time in order to pay for special program materials, field trip reservations and entrance fees. The actual cost of each session’s activity fee is included in the published camp information.

Tuition information will also be included in the published camp information. Tuition is based on each session and is due by 6:00 p.m. the first Wednesday of each summer camp session.

NIST CCC Before/After Care

The CCC offers Before/After school care for children currently enrolled in our Kindergarten program, as well as students enrolled at Diamond Elementary School. Montgomery County Public Schools provide pick-up/drop-off bus service to and from the NIST CCC. Alternatively, families could make arrangements to drop-off children after school, until the CCC closes.

Registration and participation for this program follows Center wait list procedures. Contact the CCC Director for participation in this program.

Class Vacancies Filled by Children Registered on the Waiting List

If a currently enrolled child does not fill a class vacancy, then the vacancy is offered to a registered, age-eligible child that is next on the waiting list. Except for the “Special Lottery Case” noted below, the vacancy is offered based on the following hierarchy.

A child from priority category “A”; if more than one age-eligible child from category “A” is on the waiting list, the child with the earliest registration date is offered the vacancy.

A child from priority category “B”; if more than one age-eligible child from Category “B” is on the waiting list, the child with the earliest registration date is offered the vacancy.

A child from priority category “C”; if more than one age-eligible child from Category “C” is on the waiting list, the child with the earliest registration date is offered the vacancy.

A child from priority category “D”; if more than one age-eligible child from Category “D” is on the waiting list, the child with the earliest registration date is offered the vacancy.

If the vacancy is a full-time position but the child having the highest priority ranking seeks a part-time position, the part-time vacancy is offered only if the child can be paired with a second child from the same or next lower priority category to create an equivalent full-time position. Otherwise, priority shifts to having the vacancy filled by a child that seeks a full-time position. In the event that there are no age-eligible children on the waiting list who seek the available full-time position, the Center Director may choose to break the full-time vacancy into two part-time positions while immediately filling only one of the newly formed part-time slots.

The Center Director has the option of setting an end date for responses from parents whose child is offered enrollment. If an end date is invoked, the vacancy shall be offered to the next age-eligible child on the waiting list once the end date is surpassed.

Conditions for Enrollment

Pay a one-time security deposit, which is held in escrow. The deposit is refunded within one month after the child is no longer enrolled at the Center as long as payment of all tuition and associated activities fees are current. The deposit can also be deducted from the final tuition payment provided all fees are current and the proper 30-day written notification is provided.

The parent/guardian must become a member of the NIST Child Care Association and pay the annual fee. Membership affords opportunity to vote for BOD members, per fee paid. This membership must be maintained as long as the child is enrolled at the Center.

The parent/guardian must complete a packet of enrollment forms before the child begins class. The packet includes but is not limited to a financial agreement form, an emergency contact card, a health inventory and immunization form to be completed by the child's physician, and a parent/guardian/relative work status form. Several of these forms must be updated annually, in August or September, as the new school year begins. Current, updated forms are required for all children each year.

Conditions for Termination of Enrollment

Repeated problems with tuition payments (for current tuitions as approved by the BOD, see: <http://www.nist.gov/ccc/appendices/appendix-d.cfm>)

The child and/or the parents are unwilling or unable to adhere to the NIST Child Care Center philosophy and policies laid out in this handbook. See also sections on Mandatory Withdrawal and Dismissal.

If (1) the parent/guardian's work status changes such that they do not fall into any of the admissions waiting list categories and (2) the position presently occupied by their child could be filled by a child on the waiting list, then the child will only be allowed to remain at the Center until the end of the present school year (late August).

Children as our Focus

Creating a constructive community built on mutual respect, caring and appreciation is the CCC's top priority. This is accomplished by increasing direct communication, discouraging gossip, and addressing concerns and problems through appropriate channels. The health, safety, well-being, and appropriate development of children are our priorities. In all circumstances, CCA members should be guided by how the best interests of the children can be served.

Working Together to Meet our Goals

Parents can expect to be given regular, positive and constructive feedback on a routine basis, through conversations with teachers and administrative staff at drop-off and pick-up times, phone calls to/from the Center staff, individual daily notes from the infant/toddler/twos programs, etc. Concerns and constructive feedback from Center staff will be communicated verbally or in writing, and in a professional and timely manner.

The Director and Board are committed to continuous improvement of the Center. To this end, all feedback from CCA members, parents, and teachers is welcome. All concerns and suggestions are recorded, explored, and adjudicated. We seek to make stakeholders aware of and satisfied with how a concern is addressed.

Your interest and involvement in your child's school experience is critically important to all of us. We, like you, want the very best for your child. If you ever have a concern, we want to hear from you. In order for us to address your concerns in the most professional way possible, it is important that you follow this procedure:

- ✓ Talk directly to the teacher. In many cases, she can answer your questions best. If you are not satisfied, then,
- ✓ Talk to the Director. The majority of issues/concerns that could not be resolved by the teacher can be resolved by the Director. If you are not satisfied then,
- ✓ Contact the NIST Child Care Association Board of Directors. See the list of current Board members on the Parent Information Board.

See also Appendix B: Outside Employment of Staff by CCC Families.

Negotiating Differences between Staff and Parents

All members of the CCA are responsible for the smooth functioning of the Center. Communication should remain respectful and professional at all times. CCA members are expected to bring their concerns directly and promptly to the involved party. Problems must be clearly stated with thought given to possible solutions. If the difference is between parent and a teacher, and the parent is not satisfied with the teacher's response or needs more information, the parent should speak immediately with the CCC Director. Likewise, if a teacher has a concern that cannot be addressed directly with a parent, that issue may be raised with the Director.

We are of the mind that it is better to address a concern rather than suppress it. We recommend that concerns be addressed directly between the parties involved as it allows for resolution between the parties most directly impacted. If a CCA member is uncomfortable addressing the involved party directly, s/he should approach the Director or Assistant Directors. The Director will work with the CCA member to agree upon a method of handling the concern. In most occasions, the Director will recommend accompanying the CCA member to have a discussion with the involved party.

If a concern involves the Director and the involved party is not comfortable approaching the Director,

they should seek out a Board member. Board members will encourage the party to approach the Director. They will be willing to accompany the individual in a discussion or communicate the concern on the parent's behalf. If the individual does not want to take action, the Board member will judge whether the issue is significant to the CCA community and may bring it to the attention of the Director without naming the individual. The parent will be notified of this intended action.

Hand in hand with the expectation of respectful, direct and timely communication comes our stand against gossip and rumors. This type of communication is never constructive, and can tear at the professional, supportive, courteous culture we work so hard to cultivate.

TUITION AND FEES

For a complete list of fees per child and their frequency, see Appendix A: Schedule of Fees.

Tuition

Tuition is payable in advance, every two weeks on the Monday prior to the official NIST payday. A chart indicating acceptable payment days is located on the Parent News Bulletin Board along the hallway to you left as you enter the building. The first payment upon entering the Center will include a security deposit, which is held in escrow until the last week the child is enrolled in the Center. Tuition payments can also be made via direct deposit or your bill paying service (see the Center Director or Assistant Directors for information about this option). Parents are responsible for tuition while the child is officially enrolled in the Center whether or not the child has been in attendance. No tuition credit is given for absences resulting from vacation, illness, acts of nature, or any other circumstance outside of the CCC's control (including but not limited to inclement weather, power outage, earthquake, snow, hurricane, storm, flood, terrorist attack, tornado, fire, etc.). Non-payment of tuition is grounds for termination or suspension of services. See the Parent News Board or our website at <http://www.nist.gov/ccc/appendices/appendix-d.cfm> for current tuition rates.

Tuition for a summer camp session is due by 6:00 p.m. the first Wednesday of each session.

Tuition Assistance/Scholarship Funds

The NIST CCA maintains a Scholarship Tuition Assistance Fund to assist the eligible parents of children attending the NIST CCC. Appendix E provides the eligibility income scale. Actual awards may be higher or lower and are determined by the number of families eligible for assistance and the amount of funds available. Scholarships are awarded annually, and recipients must certify twice a year in August/September, and again in February/March, of their eligibility. See our website at <http://www.nist.gov/ccc/> for scholarship projections for the school year.

Returned Checks or Insufficient Funds

There is a fee when checks are returned from the bank without payment. If tuition or other payment check is returned more than twice, personal checks may no longer be accepted. The Board of Directors reserves the right to require members who have more than two returned checks sign up for “direct deposit” to pay their tuition. The same fee applies to “direct deposit”, if notified by your financial institution that an account has insufficient funds.

Late Tuition Checks

To encourage payments to be made on time, the NIST CCA Board of Directors has imposed a late charge for tuition checks received after close of business on Wednesday of the week they are due. The late charge is imposed per workday (Monday - Friday) and continues until payment is made. If tuition has been paid by a check, which is not honored by the bank, it will also be considered a late

payment. If you are unable to make your tuition payment on time for any reason, please notify the Director as soon as possible. The Board of Directors reserves the right to require members who have excessive late tuition payments sign up for “direct deposit” to pay tuition.

Late Pick-Up (after 6 p.m. closing)

Late pick-ups are disruptive for your child and our staff. In order to discourage late pick-ups, the following policy has been established. Any family who picks up their child(ren) after 6:00 p.m. will be assessed a late pick up fee. The late fee is imposed for the first 5 minutes or any portion thereof for each child. After 6:05 p.m., the fee will increase per minute until the child is picked up. If there are more than three late pick-ups in a calendar year, this may be grounds for termination of services. Please call if you find you will be later than normal so we can alert our closing staff and your child. Staff will not close the Center until all parents and children have left. Therefore, parents of children remaining in the Center after 6:00 p.m. will be charged the late fee and asked to sign the Late Book. The wall clock over the Multi-Purpose Room will be considered the official clock. Parents who are repeatedly late picking up their child will be asked to meet with the Director and/or NIST CCA Board of Directors.

Late Pick-Up (sick children)

A parent will be notified immediately when his/her child is ill. Ill children need to be picked up promptly (within one hour of notification) to avoid further exposure to healthy children and staff. Please help us maintain a healthy, safe environment for your child and others by complying with this policy. Repeated failures to comply may result in a fee and/or the child's dismissal from the program.

Withdrawal

Parents may withdraw their child from the program at any time. A WRITTEN 30-DAY NOTICE IS REQUIRED. Two period's tuition will be charged without proper notification. The security deposit, collected at the time of admission, can be used toward the final pay period's tuition, if proper 30-day written notification is provided. Withdrawal and subsequent re-enrollment will entail submitting a new registration form and fee as well as being placed on the bottom of the waiting list within the parent/guardian's registration category.

CENTER OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Hours of Operation

The NIST Child Care Center is open 12 months a year, 5 days a week (Monday - Friday) from 6:45 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Rooms for children under 2 years of age are open from 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. The Center is closed on all Federal holidays and three (3) additional days per year for staff development and program preparation activities. Individual classrooms have varied opening and closing times, but the CCC Director will work with you to accommodate schedules within the Center's hours of operation, while maintaining required licensing ratios.

Center Late Opening or Early Closing – Inclement Weather or Emergency Situation

Changes in Center operational hours due to inclement weather or emergency situations will be announced on the Center's office phones at (301)975-2152 or (301)975-8898. An email notice to your preferred email address and a posting to the NIST Child Care Center Facebook page are also used. NIST announces delayed opening changes or closure typically by 5:30 a.m. and can be heard by calling (301)975-8000.

When NIST employees are granted "Unscheduled Leave", the Center will open at 7:45 am. If you arrive before the staff, please keep your child with you and leave a message on the Center phone mail to let us know you're at NIST. Staff will call you when the Center opens. Children may not be left at the Center unless staff members have arrived.

When NIST employees are granted "Delayed Arrival", the Center will delay opening by the number of hours indicated in the announcement (e.g., NIST is operating under a "Delayed Arrival" status, and employees are instructed to delay their arrival by 2 hours, thus the Center would open at 8:45 a.m. (6:45 a.m. + 2 hours = 8:45 a.m.))

When NIST employees are granted "Unscheduled Leave and Delayed Arrival" (announced together), the Center will delay opening by the number of hours indicated in the announcement (e.g., NIST is operating under a "Delayed Arrival" status, and employees are instructed to delay their arrival by 2 hours, thus the Center would open at 8:45 a.m. (6:45 a.m. + 2 hours = 8:45 a.m.)).

If NIST announces a specific delayed opening time (i.e. 11:00 am), NIST CCC will open 15 minutes earlier (i.e. 10:45 am) than the announced opening time provided NIST opens it gates early to allow our staff to access the campus.

Should the NIST site close early for any reason, the Center will close 30 minutes after NIST closes. Every effort will be made to notify you of the early closing once we receive official notification from NIST. A late pick-up fee is imposed for the first 5 minutes or portion thereof and per minute charge thereafter will be imposed after 30 minutes of NIST's official closing time. If an early closing is anticipated, please be sure we know where to locate you. Early closings may occur for bad weather conditions, special events, emergencies, or any other reason NIST Administration identifies.

Should a situation arise whereby the health and safety of the children and staff are in jeopardy, the

NIST Emergency Personnel and/or NIST CCA Board of Directors will close the Center. Parents will be notified and told where to pick up their children. Children must be picked up within 30 minutes of notification. A late pick-up fee will be charged for the first 5 minutes or portion thereof and a per-minute charge thereafter will be imposed.

Security - Identification Badges

All doors to Building 320 are locked at all times. Please check to see the door closes completely after you pass through. Access to the Child Care Center is allowed only through the main lobby doors via the card reader system. Parents may enter the building from the playground only after picking up your child from the playground. All NIST employees will have their NIST identification badges activated to open the child care center doors when their child is enrolled at the Center. They will be de-activated upon withdrawal. Non-NIST parents will be issued access cards for entry onto the NIST campus and into the NIST CCC only. The NIST Facilities Services Division will sponsor Non-NIST federal employees and their spouses upon completion of the appropriate forms and a successful background check is completed by the Badging Office. The access badges must be returned to the NIST CCC upon withdrawal. Access badged term dates should be monitored by the card carrier so that access does not expire. Please contact the Director for badge renewal instructions, and allow three weeks to complete the renewal process.

Arrival

Please escort your child into the Center. Help to see that his/her belongings are placed in the designated area, and that your child's hands are washed. Avoid rushing. It is important for your child to start the day happy and relaxed. Please do not leave until a staff person has received your child. Be sure to say good-bye when you leave. Never sneak away!

Please be sure that you or an authorized adult sign your child in and out using your assigned pin on the touch screens located in the main lobby. The sign in/sign out procedure is repeated each time the child arrives and departs the Center even if only for a short period of time. This is a licensing requirement, which is monitored by the Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care.

This information is also used to account for all children in the event of an emergency.

Authorized Release

You are required to advise the Center regularly where you, or a responsible adult (emergency contact person), can be reached while your child is at the Center. This is important in case your child becomes ill or is injured. Children can only be released to parents/guardians having legal custody or to emergency contact persons designated in advance by parents or legal guardians. If someone other than the parents/guardians or emergency contact person is picking up your child, a release form authorizing a specific person to pick up the child must be filled out and signed by the parent and/or legal guardian. At the time of pick up, both the designated person and a staff member must sign the form. In cases of child custody disputes, a copy of the custody papers must be kept in the child's folder in order to safeguard the rights of the child. Children will only be released to a parent bearing legal custody

unless arranged otherwise in advance. Unless custody papers are submitted, it is assumed that both parents have equal rights to pick up a child. Anyone picking up children from the Center may be asked to show photo identification. Please be sure you inform any designated contact persons of this policy. If you know you will not be the person picking up your child, please let the staff and your child know this in advance.

Catered Hot Lunch Program

A catered hot lunch program is provided to all children at the Center. Every meal includes a hot entrée, fresh fruit, carefully prepared fresh or frozen vegetables, and milk. Almost everything is made from scratch, including soups, sauces and breads. Cost for the lunch program is included in tuition and is not optional.

Childhood is the best time to develop healthy eating habits because early experiences with food have a strong impact on a child's future eating habits and health. Teaching children to eat wisely and moderately is an investment in the future. The foods children eat influence their growth, development, capacity to learn, and overall behavior. Understanding this, our Center provides a variety of nutritious and interesting breakfast and afternoon snacks. The monthly menu is posted on the parent website and at the Center. Our menus meet the standards and guidelines of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program.

The lunch program is not optional, if you prefer your child to bring lunch from home, please do so every day that your child is in attendance at the Center. We will provide milk to drink. Parents are encouraged to support the Center's efforts in developing healthy food habits. When preparing your child's lunch, we encourage you to choose lean meat, fish, and poultry. Limit foods that are high in saturated fats. Choose foods that are good sources of fiber and starch, such as whole grain breads and cereals, fruits and vegetables, and dried beans and peas. Avoid foods that are high in sugar and sodium. Your help in providing lunches that do not contain candy or junk food is greatly appreciated.

All food allergies must be reported to the staff and documentation of the allergy must be recorded in the child's health folder by the child's physician. In addition, if your child has a severe allergy, we also ask you to provide a recent photograph of your child upon enrollment. The lunch caterer provides a list of food ingredients to avoid possible allergy complications. See the Director or Assistant Directors for a copy or visit the parent website.

Outdoor Play

As part of their active day, children are afforded as many opportunities as possible for outdoor play. While each classroom strives to accomplish both morning and afternoon outdoor play times, the weather sometimes prohibits such activity, or delays the scheduling of such activity throughout the day. Outside time is limited during inclement or excessively hot or cold weather. Children will go outside when temperatures are between 20° and 90° F. Children will remain inside on "Code Red" days. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. In addition, we ask that you apply the first coat of sunscreen at home or upon arrival at the Center. With your permission, CCC staff will reapply sunscreen, as needed, to your child's exposed skin. You supply the sunscreen

in its original container, labeled with your child's first and last name. With your permission, CCC staff will apply bug repellent spray, as needed, to your child's clothing. We ask that you supply bug repellent spray in its original container, labeled with your child's first and last name.

Rest Periods

Infants

Infant specific rest information can be found in the Infant Room Specific Procedure and Policies section on page 26.

Ages 18 months through 4 years

Center children have a long, active day. Naptime is a designated time from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Children are encouraged to sleep during naptime. Soft music and back rubs help the children relax. Scheduling a specific time to rest is a Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care regulation. Children who do not sleep are permitted to get up earlier than 3:00 p.m. and play quietly on their cot after an hour or so while others are sleeping.

Each child is provided with his/her own cot. Sheets are also provided by the Center for the cots and are washed weekly, or more often as needed. Parents are also requested to provide a small blanket and, if necessary, a crib-size pillow for their child to use during nap time. Full size bed pillows are not allowed at the center for health reasons. These items are sent home for cleaning each Friday, and more often if needed.

Kindergarten students

Kindergarten students will have a shorten-rest period during the first half of the school year. Each child will be provided with his/her own rest mat. Sheets for the mats, a blanket and small pillow (if required) are provided by the parent. Kindergarten children who do not require a nap will be allowed to read quietly on their mat.

Departures

When parents arrive for pick up, children are expected to put away their projects and toys and prepare to leave. Remember your child may be excited about a project completed that day and want to share with you at this time. It is important that you allow enough time at the end of the day to pick up your child and collect their belongings so as to exit the Center by 6:00 p.m. Teachers may not always be available to help the children gather their belongings and put on their coats. We ask for your help in tending to your child's needs at this time. Please be sure that you or the authorized adult signs your child out on the touchscreen in the main lobby. A person authorized by the parents or guardians to pick up their child may have to show photo identification if he/she is unfamiliar to the staff. Please be sure the staff knows your child is leaving. Children will not be released to minors.

Playground Use

Parents are welcome to stay in the evening and allow their children to play outside until the center closes at 6:00 pm. NIST Security and our insurance carrier request all families vacate the premises when center staff is not present. We do ask that you help your child pick up and put away any toys that he/she has been playing with before leaving. To insure your child's safety, we request that only kindergarteners or older children use the climber to the far left of the playground as you exit the building. This equipment is designed for children ages five and over and is unsafe for younger children. In addition, the enclosed equipment within the playground is designed for and limited to children younger than the age of three. We request that parents closely supervise children on the playground at all times for their safety. The Center is closed at 6:00pm, and due to insurance restrictions, parents should not reenter the building for any reason when staff members are no longer present.

Photographs and Publicity

Photographs of the children participating in our programs may be taken periodically and may appear in newspapers, magazines, brochures or other publicity materials. Permission for the use of these photographs, to be used without compensation and with child anonymity, is requested when your child attends the NIST Child Care Center.

Reporting Child Abuse

The employees of the NIST Child Care Center are required by law to report all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. It is important to tell the teachers or Director the nature and circumstances behind any unusual bruises or injuries that your child has received. This will aid in evaluating and not over reacting to a situation.

Mandatory Withdrawal

Families may be asked to withdraw from the CCC for any of the following reasons:

- 1) Delinquency of tuition or fees;
- 2) Non-compliance with the CCC policies;
- 3) Inability of the child or parent to adjust to the CCC's program; or
- 4) Inappropriate or unacceptable behavior of child or parent toward Center staff or other enrolled children.

With the exception of withdrawal due to delinquency of tuition or fees, parents will be notified 2 weeks in advance of the termination date for their child's enrollment at the Center. Prior to termination, a 1 to 4 week probationary period will be established by the CCC Director. Continuing attempts will be made to work together with the parents to find a solution and/or resolve the problem. Community resources will be utilized to the fullest extent possible. If the problem or situation is unresolved following this probationary period, the child will be withdrawn. The Center Director, as

representative of the NIST CCC, is the final authority on termination of a child's enrollment at the Center.

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INFANT ROOM SPECIFIC PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Rest Periods

Depending on the child's age and development, one, two or three naps will be provided per day for our youngest children according to their own individual schedule. Center staff will work with parents on the timing of naps and staff will work to maintain the routines used at home. Soft music and back rubs help the children relax. Each child is provided with his/her own crib or cot as appropriate. Sheets are provided by the Center and will be washed weekly or more often if necessary. Parents are also requested to provide a small blanket. Infants will be placed on their back to sleep. If you request that your child sleeps in a different position other than on their back, a physician's note that explains why your baby should not use a back sleeping position is required. Your child's crib is the safest place for sleeping and no child will be allowed to remain sleeping in swings, bouncers or car seats.

Supplies

Infants entering the NIST CCC will need to have:

- ✓ 1 jumbo size package of disposable diapers
- ✓ 1 box of wipes
- ✓ diaper ointment
- ✓ 2 burp clothes
- ✓ 2 bibs
- ✓ 2 water resistant bibs once solid food has begun
- ✓ Prepared and labeled formula or breast milk, jar food, etc.
- ✓ Solid baby food according to child's needs
- ✓ 2-3 changes of clothing appropriate to the season
- ✓ 1 light blanket

All items must be labeled with child's first and last name.

Parent/guardian must replenish the above items when requested on your child's daily status report.

All bottles (used and unused) must be taken home nightly.

Meals

All food for infants is provided by the parent/guardian. NIST CCC staff will feed the food provided by parents until a minimum of one year old and instruction by parents that the school diet may be initiated with their child. Solid baby food provided by the parent should be introduced by the parent/guardian prior to providing it to NIST CCC staff for feeding. Parents are required to provide a nutritional diet for their infant.

Please fill bottles only with the amount of formula or breast milk that the child will drink at each feeding. Glass bottles are not accepted to avoid the potential for glass breakage and injury to children and staff. Bottles will be warmed in a container of water that is no warmer than 120 degrees. Unused portions of bottles will be discarded within one hour from the beginning of the feeding.

When an infant is ready, solid foods other than breast milk or formula should be added to the diet. Check with your doctor on when he or she recommends the addition of complementary foods.

Parents should not leave any bottles, open food or formula at the center at the end of the day. All opened food items that are not taken home will be discarded at the end of the day.

The NIST CCC follows the guidelines from the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program to help babies grow healthy and happily.

Lactation Areas

Several lactation/breastfeeding areas are provided in the center. Room 39 is provided as a private lactation room that can be used for either breastfeeding or for breast milk expression. Curtained off areas with gliders are present in the two infant rooms for breastfeeding of children within the infant classrooms.

DISCIPLINE

The ultimate goal of discipline is self-discipline—self-control and self-direction. Our goals in caring for the NIST CCC children include directing their behavior with words and by example, so that they will learn the skills necessary to control their own behavior and cooperate with others. It is important for each child to learn self-control and to respect the rights of others while learning in a safe and caring environment. While in the care of our center, we teach children to respect themselves, their friends and teachers, their environment and materials. This will be accomplished with love, respect, and consistency. It is our intention to try to prevent many behavior problems by providing direct supervision and guidance, age appropriate activities, love and interaction, a daily routine and clear boundaries.

Discipline is NOT punishment, but a means to encourage self-control and responsibility. Discipline is teaching a child how to be safe, how to behave on his/her own and how to know the difference between right and wrong. It is nurturing and educational. Good discipline is based on caring, honesty, respect and trust. Children will be treated with respect and in turn are able to be respectful to others. We expect the children and adults to observe four rules of respect in regards to their life at the center. These are:

1. Respect for self
2. Respect for others
3. Respect for materials, tools, and equipment
4. Respect for the environment

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Children will be allowed to express all of their feelings both positive and negative. The staff will listen to children and help them to deal with their feelings. Positive behavior will always be promoted first through routines, effective commands and reinforcement of good behaviors. Appropriate behaviors will be rewarded, as adult approval is very important to children.

While understanding that children of different ages will have varied expectations regarding what is developmentally appropriate behavior, NIST CCC will not be able to tolerate continuous disruptive, aggressive or violent behavior by children of any age.

Principles for Guiding Behavior

Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, NIST CCC will practice the following discipline and behavior management strategies to guide behavior:

We do:

- Model appropriate behavior and serve as role models.
- Praise, reward, and encourage the children.
- Listen to the children.
- Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.

- Offer children choices throughout the day to help them feel empowered.
- Redirect children to another activity if having difficulty focusing on the activity at hand.
- Expect behavior from a child that is appropriate for their age.
- Tell them what to do rather than what not to do.
- Reason with and set limits for the children using their input to developing classroom rules.
- Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behavior.
- Speak to the child/children regarding the action in a calm yet firm voice. Voices may be raised *slightly* to alert the children that you are disapproving of their behavior or to alert the children of impending danger.
- Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children, such as walking away, ignoring, working in a quiet designated area in the classroom, or talking through a problem.
- Allow children to try and resolve conflicts that are not violent amongst themselves.
- Ignore minor misbehaviors.
- Explain things to the children on their levels.

We do NOT

- Spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap or otherwise physically punish the children.
- Make fun of, yell at, threaten, demean, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
- Shame or punish children when bathroom accidents occur.
- Deny food or rest as punishment.
- Relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
- Leave the children alone, unattended or without supervision.
- Allow discipline of children by children.
- Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child or children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

Remedial Actions

In response to inappropriate behavior the staff will:

1. Gain the child's attention verbally or by physically going to the child.
2. Intervene and stop the unwanted behavior or action.
3. Speak to the child/children regarding the action at their eye-level.
4. Remind the children of the rules.
5. Redirect the child to an appropriate activity or give the choice of an activity.
6. If the behaviors continue, the child will be removed from the situation completely.

Parent involvement may be required. Center staff will notify a parent if this is the case or if there seems to be a consistent problem area that needs to be addressed. Our center believes that it is very important for parents to work closely together in any child-rearing goals, especially with discipline issues. We want to work together with parents to solve any problems that arise. We will initially communicate behavior issues with you during our end of the day conversation. For repeat offenses, you will be contacted by a phone call to your work or home or by a note or email. If a serious problem continues and needs to be discussed we will schedule an appointment to explore solutions. If after a verbal notice, phone call or written message and a conference the behavior continues the child

will be removed from the class for the rest of that specific day. The parents will be called to pick up the child. In some instances, participation in counselling (delivered by school or community mental health providers) will be recommended. The communication street runs two ways – if a parent feels there is an issue to discuss regarding discipline or any other issue, we would expect they would also voice their concerns.

Dismissal

In general, we do not expel children from the center as this does not allow us to adequately deal with the behavior we are trying to change. However, if after all the above steps have been followed by the child, parents, staff and Center Director, and a child's behavior cannot be resolved, the child may be dismissed from the program.

Any parent or guardian who is disruptive to the program, does not comply with the policies of NIST Child Care Center, or whose behavior is intimidating to the children, parents of other children or the staff of the Center, will be asked to leave the program.

See Mandatory Withdrawal.

EMERGENCY PLANS

Severe Weather – Evacuation Plan

If the NIST Fire Protection Group, Police Department or Emergency Manager recommends the evacuation of NIST CCC, the following plans are in place:

All children from the infant, toddler and twos classrooms and their teachers will walk to Building 233 and assemble in the hallway by the front doors. Three (3) non-mobile children are to be placed in each of the evacuation cribs and rolled to Building 233. All other children are to walk. Children in preschool, kindergarten and school-age classrooms will walk to Building 101 and assemble in the Portrait Lounge.

1. Staff must take attendance when leaving NIST CCC and upon arrival at Buildings 233 or 101.
2. Staff must take the following items to their respective Buildings:
 - Emergency Cards
 - Attendance Book
 - Children’s tote bags and personal items as needed for diapering and allergies (medications, alternative food, etc.).
 - Quiet activity for children: i.e., crayons and paper, books other quiet activities to keep the children occupied during our stay there.

Parents will be notified of our evacuation as soon as possible via a phone call from a NIST CCC staff person or by parent email.

If the Child Care Center is evacuated at **3:30 p.m. or later**, NIST CCC will be closing and the children will not be moved back to Building 320. Parents will be asked to pick up their children immediately in the respective buildings or as soon as conditions allow for safe departures. If called to pick up his/her child, the parent must come within **thirty (30) minutes** of notification or late fees as stated above will apply. If NIST CCC is evacuated earlier than 3:30 p.m., a decision will be made whether to move the children back to Building 320 or to dismiss from Building 233 and 101, based on emergency/weather conditions. Parents will be advised of the decision as promptly as possible.

Adjustment in Opening Hours – Due to Inclement Weather – Snow/Ice

Delayed Arrival – When NIST is operating under a “Delayed Arrival” Status, the Center will delay opening by the hours indicated in the announcement, e.g., NIST is operating under a “Delayed Arrival” Status and employees are instructed to delay their arrival by 2 hours, thus the Center would open at 8:45 a.m. (6:45 a.m. + 2 hrs. = 8:45 a.m.).

Unscheduled Leave – When NIST is operating under an “Unscheduled Leave” Status, the Center will open at 7:45 a.m.

Delayed Arrival-Unscheduled Leave (announced together) – When NIST is operating under a “Delayed Arrival-Unscheduled Leave” Status, the Center will delay opening by the hours indicated in

the announcement, i.e., NIST employees are instructed to delay their arrival by 2 hours, thus the Center would open at 8:45 a.m. (6:45 a.m. + 2 hrs. = 8:45 a.m.). If NIST announces a specific delayed opening time (i.e. 11:00 am), NIST CCC will open 15 minutes earlier (i.e. 10:45 am) than the announced opening time provided NIST opens their gates prior to the announced opening to allow the staff to enter the campus.

Please note: “Delayed Arrival” and “Unscheduled Leave” occur when weather and road conditions are potentially dangerous. These adjustments in our operating hours give our staff more travel time, which is crucial during wintry weather conditions.

Early Dismissal (Early Closing) – Due to Inclement Weather - Snow/Ice or Emergency Situation

If the NIST site closes early due to inclement weather or for an emergency situation, the Center will close 30 minutes after NIST closes. Every effort will be made to notify parents of the early closing once we receive official notification from NIST. If NIST closes early, NIST employees will be notified in their own offices/labs by the NIST administration. Please stay alert when weather deteriorates or an emergency situation develops so you can pick up your child in a timely manner. A late pick up fee will be imposed for the first 5 minutes or portion thereof and a \$1.00 per minute charge thereafter beginning 30 minutes from NIST’s official closing time.

Emergency Situation – “Shelter-in-Place” Plan

If the NIST Fire Protection Group, Police Department, or Emergency Manager recommends NIST CCC shelter-in-place based upon severe weather conditions (such as strong thunderstorms, high winds, or local tornado activity) the following plans are in place:

1. Staff and children will proceed to Rooms 20/21 (Kindergarten/School Age Classrooms) as these classrooms are reinforced for our protection. Staff must take attendance before leaving their classroom and upon arrival to the Rooms 20 and 21.
2. Staff must take the following items to Rooms 20 and 21:
 - Emergency Cards
 - Attendance Book
 - Children’s personal items as needed for diapering and allergies (medications, alternative food, etc.).
 - Quiet activity for children: i.e., crayons and paper, books other quiet activities to keep the children occupied during our stay there.
3. Staff members in Room 20 and 21 are to assist the Director/Assistant Director(s) in lowering emergency window coverings and then the hallway door coverings once all classrooms have gathered into Rooms 20 and 21. The cranks can be found in the storage closets of both rooms and hanging by the doorways. The coverings should also be locked from the inside to prevent unauthorized entry.
4. Parents will be notified of our gathering in Rooms 20 and 21 as soon as possible via a phone call or parent email from a NIST CCC staff person.
5. Children will remain with staff in Rooms 20 and 21 until conditions improve.

Once the emergency event has subsided and clearance is given by NIST Emergency personnel, teachers and their students may return to the respective classrooms. If the building has sustained damage and the center must close for the day, parents will be asked to come immediately to pick up his/her child. If called to pick up his/her child, the parent must come within **thirty (30) minutes** of notification. A late pick-up fee will be imposed for the first five (5) minutes or portion thereof and per minute charge thereafter.

Important Note: Please call the NIST Status Line at (301) 975-8000 for information regarding changes in NIST's operating hours. For specific information regarding changes in the Center's operating hours, call the CCC at (301)975-2152 or (301)975-8898.

A TYPICAL DAY AT THE CENTER

Parents often ask “What does my child do all day?” This is a wonderful question! The activities and schedules vary from class to class, depending on the age of the children, but some things occur every day for every child two years and older. Here is what to expect:

The Center opens at 6:45 a.m. and classrooms open as staff and children arrive. All rooms are open by 8:15 a.m. The morning arrival time is structured to allow the children to have free choice activities so that staff is able to spend a few moments greeting each parent and child. The morning routines vary from room to room, but every room serves breakfast, offers a group gathering time, free choice activities, small group teacher-directed activities, individualized activities and a time to play outside. Lunch is served between 11:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. depending on the classroom. Following lunch, every group has a transition to rest time, then a rest period. The length of the rest period is determined by the ages of the children and the composition of the group. The general rule is the younger the child the longer the rest period. Children who do not sleep are permitted to participate in quiet activities on their cot or mat after an hour or so. Following rest time, afternoon activities include snack time, small group teacher-directed activities, individualized activities, free choice activities, outside time, story time and other whole group gathering activities.

The Center’s curriculum is based on the needs and interests of the children. Our four year old classrooms use the MSDE approved curriculum, DLM Early Childhood Express. With The DLM Early Childhood Express children develop concrete skills through experiences with music, art, storytelling, hands-on activities and teacher-directed lessons in eleven curriculum areas that in addition to skills development, emphasizes practice and reflection. Our three-year-old classrooms use the MSDE approved curriculum, The Investigators Club, Just For Threes Learning System. This curriculum helps three year-old children develop important readiness skills in ten critical learning areas while nurturing the child and encouraging cognitive, physical and emotional growth through play with a purpose. Activities and curriculum for children under the age of three follow the guidelines established in *MSDE Healthy Beginnings: Supporting Development and Learning from Birth through Three Years of Age*. For all children weekly activities are planned across the curriculums in the areas of language arts, science, creative arts, math, music and movement paying close attention to each child’s cognitive, language, physical, personal and social development. The daily schedule and weekly lesson plans are posted for each classroom for your review. Feel free to ask the staff and/or Director for information about the activities that are offered daily for your child.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

Birthdays

Birthdays are a very special occasion in the life of a child and a great sharing opportunity as well. If you would like your child to share a birthday treat with the class on his or her special day, we would be delighted! We encourage nutritious treats such as fruit, muffins, banana bread, etc., in lieu of traditional high sugared cake. Please be mindful of children in the classroom who may have food allergies when celebrating. Food served to children must be store bought, not prepared at home. This is a licensing and health department regulation. Your involvement for birthday celebrations and other special occasions is more important than the type of food served. We will be happy to distribute birthday party invitations only if every child in the class receives one. Birthday celebrations should be fun for everyone, and you are welcome to plan events at the Center for all children to enjoy.

School Dress

We work and play hard at the NIST CCC. Please help your child “dress for success” by selecting comfortable, washable clothing for your child to wear in school. Elastic waistbands are best for pants. All children want to feel comfortable and free to climb and run, to paint and build, to exercise their muscles and imaginations. Dress your child so he/she can become self-sufficient in dressing. Please avoid one piece outfits, such as overalls or "onesies" for children over the age of two to encourage their self-help skills especially when potty-training.

Climbing, running, biking, and digging are just a few of the activities that your children will participate in when playing outside. Sneakers are recommended for outside play. It is important that your child’s shoes protect the top of the foot, have closed-toes and good gripping action, and have laces or Velcro that securely hold the shoe on the child's foot.

The children will be going outside every day, weather permitting. (Children will go outside when temperatures are between 20° and 90° F. Children will remain inside on “Code Red” days.) Please send outdoor wear appropriate to the season, including hats and mittens, snow pants and boots. Label all clothing items with your child’s first and last name. Please purchase a pair of snow boots that is large enough for the child to put on him/herself. Children are required to wear tight fitting water/pool shoes that will stay on the child’s feet as they run through sprinklers on summer Sprinkler Days. Open toe shoes/sandals, flip flops, clogs or resin footwear are not acceptable for the safety of your children.

A child who rides a two-wheel bike must wear a helmet. He/she will not be permitted to ride unless it is worn. Bike accidents have been known to cause serious head and neck injury. Your child’s safety is always our primary concern.

We do not want to curtail the children's involvement with the outdoors and their opportunities to develop their physical skills. We do, however, want to take all the necessary precautions to ensure their safety. Your support in complying with these requests is greatly appreciated.

Change of Clothes

Each child must have a complete change of clothing at school, including socks and underwear. For infants we request three sets of clothing. For toddlers and children up to 3 years of age, we request two sets of clothing. Please be sure the clothes are appropriate for the season. Extra clothes should be checked monthly to be sure they still fit. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.

Toilet Learning

We recognize that the toilet learning process may be challenging for both children and parents. When to begin helping a child learn to use the toilet should be a decision made largely by parents and based on signs of readiness from the child. Beginning too early often leads to frustration and power struggles between the child and adult. The importance of individualizing the age at which children learn to use the toilet cannot be over emphasized. If you are helping your child at home with this developmental task, please let us know so we can assist your child at school. This is definitely a time when we need to be partners.

Parents are asked to provide disposable diapers and wipes for your child. A child who is being taught to use the toilet should wear "training" underpants. He/she will be encouraged to use the toilet periodically. We discourage the use of "pull-ups" or rubber pants. Clothing from accidents will be sent home for laundering. Office of Child Care regulations prohibits staff from removing or cleaning fecal matter from soiled clothing. We ask that you provide a minimum of 2 sets of clean clothing that will remain at the Center for use if the need arises.

At school, toilet training is done in a positive and encouraging way. Your child will be offered several opportunities to use the bathroom. If he/she needs help dressing or undressing, a staff member will be happy to assist. Children will be encouraged to be self-sufficient as much as possible. Children are neither punished for accidents nor physically forced to use the toilet, but are encouraged to do so. We request that a similar program be used at home. Please talk with the staff if you need any ideas or suggestions. We find a consistent approach is the best way to get children on the right track in using the bathroom.

Bottle and Pacifier Use Outside of Infant Rooms

The Health Department and the Center discourage the use of a bottle and/or a pacifier for a child over two while at the Center. There is a tendency to share these items with other children, thus promoting the spread of germs. Please talk with the staff if your child over two still uses a bottle or pacifier to develop a plan to wean the child from these items while at the center.

Toys and Items Brought from Home

Toys and items brought from home have a tendency to cause problems. We recognize, however, that children spend a great deal of time here, and that they sometimes enjoy sharing items brought from home. If your child wants to bring in a toy from home, please adhere to the following procedures. Do

not send in any items of great sentimental or monetary value. We cannot be responsible for breakage or loss. Although we do our best to supervise the use of toys, sometimes things do happen! Some rooms have specific share days; please check with your child's teachers to be sure of their room policy. Children are encouraged to bring in a variety of items other than toys, particularly books, tapes, CD's, and photographs. Toy guns or weapons are never allowed. Please be sure to label all toys with your child's first and last name.

ILLNESS AND INJURY CONCERNS

Medical Requirements

The Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care requires that all children in group care have an up-to-date physical examination and required immunizations prior to admission. Although children do not have a need for annual immunizations after a period of time, all children should have a yearly physical. Please be sure your child's immunization records are kept current by providing an updated copy of your child's immunizations when additional shots are given by their doctor after enrollment. Your child's health inventory record will need to be updated annually. New forms are distributed to all families before the beginning of every school year (late August). Parents are asked to assist the Center by returning the forms in a timely manner.

Illness

Keeping our Center a healthy place requires your cooperation, understanding, and compliance with our health standards. Children should be excluded when they are not able to fully participate with the program, or in the case of our child care settings, when their level of care needed during an illness is not able to be met without jeopardizing the health and safety of the other children, or when there is a risk of spread to other children that cannot be avoided with appropriate environmental or individual management. We are not equipped to care for children who are not well, nor do we have extra staff to stay for long periods of time with children who are not well enough to participate in regular school activities. In other words, if the child is healthy enough to come to school, they will be expected to participate fully. For this reason, the NIST Child Care Center must take a firm position in regard to the health of each child (as well as staff members) who attend the NIST Child Care Center. With this in mind, please read and follow our policy on health and help us keep your child, the other children and staff, healthy.

- 1) Each child is required by Maryland regulations to have an up-to-date physical examination prior to entrance. Immunizations must be up-to-date. A lead screening is also required for all children and/or a lead blood test for children who have lived, or currently live in certain Maryland zip codes. Please consult your child's physician.
- 2) **CHILDREN WHO ARE SICK MUST NOT TO BE BROUGHT TO THE CENTER.** Children, who exhibit symptoms of illness upon arrival, will not be allowed to attend the Center that day. The symptoms of illness for which State regulations require that a child be excluded from the Center include the following:
 - a) **Fever-** Defined as a temperature greater than 100.0°F orally. An oral temperature is approximately equivalent to 101°F rectally or temporally (Temporal Artery Forehead Scan) or 99.5° F axillary (armpit). (Note: A child may have a fever for many reasons. Any child with a fever and behavior changes, or other symptoms of an acute illness, will be excluded and parents notified.)
 - b) **Vomiting** – Two or more episodes in a 24 hour period. Exclusion should occur until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider clears for return
 - c) **Respiratory distress** (asthma that may severely restrict the child's activities, severe cold, chest

- congestion)
- d) Suspected ringworm, pink eye, conjunctivitis
- e) Scabies
- f) Rashes, skin infections
- g) Diarrhea (Note: A child with loose or watery stools of increased frequency that is not associated by change in diet will be excluded if stool is not able to be contained in a diaper or in the toilet, or child is soiling undergarments, the stool contains blood, if the child is ill or has any signs of acute illness. is accompanied by fever or shows evidence of dehydration such as reduced urine or dry mouth. With appropriate documentation, a child with diarrhea may be readmitted when an infectious cause of diarrhea has been treated and the child is cleared by a health care provider, in conjunction with the local health department if necessary or if the diarrhea has been determined by the local health department to not be an infectious risk to others.)
- h) Severe pain or discomfort
- i) Swollen joints
- j) Sore throat or deep coughs
- k) Other obvious complaints or not feeling well such as extreme tiredness or lethargy, headaches, stiff neck, etc.

3) Listed below is a chart of communicable diseases and the requirements for exclusion from the Center. The exclusions are REQUIRED by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The Center allows NO EXCEPTIONS to this policy. If your child is diagnosed as having any of the following diseases, he or she cannot return to the Center for the amount of time and/or requirement listed after each disease.

DISEASE	REQUIRED EXCLUSION
Conjunctivitis (infectious pink eye)	Until medically cleared with documentation from a health care provider, after 24 hours of antibiotic therapy or symptoms have resolved.
Diarrheal Illness: Unknown Cause	Until diarrhea has resolved and child is diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours; or cleared by physician
Diarrheal Illness: Campylobacter	If symptomatic must be cleared by local health department after further testing
Diarrheal Illness: E. Coli	If symptomatic until cleared by local health department
Diarrheal Illness: Giardia	Until treated.
Diarrheal Illness: Norovirus	Until 48 hours after resolution of symptoms
Diarrheal Illness: Rotavirus	Until 48 hours after resolution of symptoms
Diarrheal Illness: Salmonella	Children not toilet trained whether symptomatic or not or cleared by physician.
Diarrheal Illness: Shigella	If symptomatic must be cleared by local health department after further testing
Diphtheria	Until cleared by Health Department
Haemophilus Influenzae type B (HIB)	24 hours of antibiotic therapy

Hand, Foot and Mouth (coxsackle-viruses)	When “hand to mouth” behavior uncontrollable, not able to contain secretions, or draining sores cannot be covered
Hepatitis A	At least 2 weeks after onset of early symptoms or 1 week after onset of jaundice
Herpes Simplex Virus	When child is drooling and cannot contain secretions or meets other exclusion criteria
Impetigo	If lesions cannot be covered, and until 24 hours of antibiotic therapy if indicated.
Influenza (Seasonal)	Until without fever for 24 hours
Lice, Body (Pediculosis corporis)	At the end of the school day. Skin may need treatment with pediculicide – if one is used exclude for 24 hours after first treatment is completed.
Lice, Head (Pediculosis capitis)	At the end of the program day until after first treatment completed
Measles (Rubeola)	Until 4 days after onset of rash in otherwise healthy children and for the duration of illness in immunocompromised children
Meningitis (Viral or Aseptic)	Until physician clears for return
Meningitis (Bacterial)	Until physician clears for return
Meningococcal Disease	Until physician clears for return
Mumps	5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	5 days of antibiotic therapy. Untreated cases should be excluded 21 days from the date the cough began.
Polio	Until cleared by health department
Ringworm of scalp	Until oral treatment has been initiated
Ringworm of skin or body	Until oral or topical treatment has been initiated as long as lesions can be covered
Rubella (German measles)	7 days after onset of rash. With an outbreak, unimmunized individuals should be excluded until they are immunized.
Scabies	Until treatment has been initiated, usually overnight
Staphylococcal infection (Staph, Impetigo, including MRSA)	If lesion cannot be covered and until 24 hours of antibiotic therapy if indicated or cleared by health care practitioner
Streptococcal Disease (Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever/Impetigo)	24 hours of antibiotic therapy
Tuberculosis	Until treatment has been initiated and cleared by Health Department
Typhoid Fever	Until cleared by Health Department for those who are symptomatic.

Varicella Zoster Virus: Chicken pox	Until lesions are completely dried and crusted, usually 5 days after the onset of the rash.
Varicella Zoster Virus: Shingles	Until lesions are completely dried and crusted or fully covered

- 4) If your child has been exposed to or diagnosed as having a communicable disease, you must notify the Center immediately. A doctor's medical release must be presented before a child with a communicable disease can return to the Center. It is also important that you let us know if your child has head lice so that we may ensure proper cleaning of the affected classroom and its contents.
- 5) A child sent home with a fever **MUST NOT RETURN UNTIL THE TEMPERATURE HAS BEEN NORMAL** (less than 100.0°F orally or equivalent; 101°F rectally/temporally or 99.5° F axillary/armpit) **FOR 24 HOURS**, and the other symptoms have subsided.
- 6) If your child has any type of allergy, it must be reported to the staff and recorded in the child's records. A food allergy action plan must be provided by the child's physician.
- 7) If your child has asthma, it must be reported to the staff and recorded in the child's records. An asthma action plan must be provided by the child's physician.

You will be notified and expected to pick up your child within the hour if, during the day, he/she begins to show any of the above symptoms. Meanwhile, the child may be isolated from the other children to help prevent further spread of any illness as well as to make the child more comfortable.

Repeated noncompliance with the Center's health guidelines and procedures may precipitate the child's termination at the Center.

Medication(s)

WRITTEN PERMISSION is required by a parent in order to administer medication to a child. Only prescription medication can be given, and at least one dose of the medication must be given to the child at home in case of an allergic reaction. No over-the-counter medications will be administered unless a note is provided by the doctor with specific instructions. All medications to be administered at the Center must be in the original container bearing the child's name, the medication, the dosage, the time and duration it is to be given. Each medicine container must include the written instructions for dispensing. Parents should provide a medicine spoon for their child, if needed.

The only exception to the above policy is for items approved my MSDE Office of Child Care as basic care items. Basic care items may be used for the prevention of sunburn, dry skin, diaper rash, and chapped lips. The items may be used only in the absence of broken skin and when there is no sign of infections which may be indicated by redness, heat, and pain. These may be administered by the staff with a parent signature on the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care, Medication Authorization Form. Please note, if the diaper rash or other condition has opened the skin, written permission by a doctor will be required to apply a basic care item. Please arrange for medication to be given at lunchtime, if at all possible. No Tylenol, aspirin, eye or ear drops, or other ointments can be given. All unused medicine will be returned to the parent/legal guardian after 10 days.

Children who must take medicine on an ongoing basis for longer than 10 days or who need to have medicine available in case of an emergency, must have a doctor's written permission for the Center to administer the medicine. Please make sure your child's teacher is aware that medication must be administered. A form must be filled out authorizing a staff member to give the medicine. All medicine must be given to a staff person, who in turn will put it in a locked box in the classroom or refrigerator.

Please consider asking your child's physician to prescribe medications which can be administered by you at home. The Center is a busy place, and while our staff is very conscientious, we do forget things from time to time. Please try to arrange to have all medication given at home to prevent a missed dose of medication when possible.

Allergies

It is hard to believe that foods most of us eat and enjoy every day can be harmful or deadly to others, but it is true. Eggs, cow's milk, peanuts, soy, wheat, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish are the most common foods causing allergic reactions, but almost any food has the potential to trigger an allergy. When a child has a life threatening or serious allergy to peanuts, peanuts will be prohibited from use in that child's classroom or any area that the child uses during the day. All parents in the affected classroom(s) will be notified in writing of the banning of peanuts and are expected to comply with this request. For all other food or substances, the Center will work with the child's family to provide the safest possible environment, and customize a special health care plan in cooperation with the child's physician.

Emergencies and Injuries

Minor injuries will be treated with first aid. Any first aid treatment rendered will be reported to the parents. Any serious injury or injury from the neck up will be reported to the parent immediately while injuries of a less serious nature below the neck will be reported at pick-up. An incident report will be prepared for your signature. Our staff is certified in basic first aid and infant/child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

In the case of a severe injury or medical emergency:

- 1) The NIST Fire Protection Group will be called at extension 2222.
- 2) We will attempt to notify the parents or emergency contact person(s) immediately.
- 3) The child will be transported to the nearest hospital (Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Shady Grove Road & Route 28).
- 4) A Center staff member will accompany him/her to the emergency room if the parent cannot be reached. Your previously signed, "Emergency Medical Release" Form, will be brought to the hospital to ensure immediate care for your child prior to your arrival. Another staff member will continue to contact a parent until such time that a parent is reached.

Poison Control

In the unlikely event of a child swallowing or coming in contact with a poisonous substance, the Director and/or staff will call the Poison Control Center, describe the incident and the poison consumed. Recommendation for treatment will be followed. Parents will be notified immediately.

PARENT INTERESTS AND INVOLVEMENT

Transitioning to the CCC

New families whose child will be entering the Center are provided an opportunity to discuss the Center's policies/procedures and any concerns they may have with the Director or Assistant Directors. The parents and child are encouraged to visit the Center, prior to the child's first day of class, to meet the staff and become familiar with the environment. We strongly recommend that your child spend time in the classroom with the parent to ease the transition from home to school. Class visits can be arranged through the Director or Assistant Directors.

Transitioning between CCC Classrooms

Besides the initial transition that you and your child make when you enroll in our Center, the next adjustment will be moving your child from one class to the next (i.e., progression). In some cases this may involve moving with the class or by themselves and changing teachers and peers. We strongly recommend that you talk with your child about the transition, and possibly visit the new classroom prior to participation. Children moving at the start of a new school year will have opportunities to visit the new classrooms with their current teachers to meet their new teachers for the upcoming school year. Children changing classrooms in the middle of a school year often transition alone and will then be offered opportunities to visit the new classroom for several short periods over a few days up to a week before the actual move date to ease the transition.

Transitioning to Elementary School or Other Settings

The CCC Staff are available to make any moves outside the CCC as smooth and stress-free as possible. Our staff is available, at your request, to talk with your child's new elementary school teacher or other caregiver. Past medical and educational information will be supplied to county school systems when your child leaves our kindergarten program and transitions to first grade with your written approval.

Classroom Orientation

At the beginning of each school year, each classroom hosts an orientation "Back to School" night between teachers and parents. We strongly recommend that you attend to discuss curricula, operations, expectations, communications, etc., of your child's new classroom. This event is best suited for adults only.

Parent Communication with the Center

It is important that parents and staff work cooperatively and communicate freely with one another. Many things can influence a child's emotional state when he/she arrives at school. It is often helpful for us to understand the reason for your child's excitement or upset so that we can better respond to

his/her needs. Written notes work well in communicating this type of information. You are also welcome to call during nap time (1:00 - 3:00 p.m.) to inquire about your child's progress or to discuss a concern with your child's teacher. If the staff isn't available when you call, your message will be given to the teacher who will return your call as soon as possible.

Electronic mail (e-mail) distribution lists are established at the beginning of each school year, and maintained throughout the year with changes to parent's contact information. The Center maintains an e-mail list (based on classroom lists) whereby the Director and/or Board sends communications on an as-needed basis.

The Association's Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is an elected body of volunteers, serving 2-year terms. The membership consists of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Personnel Chair, Fundraising Chair, and at-large members. The current Board membership is listed on a small bulletin board in the hallway to your left as you enter the building. Should there be a concern by an Association member believed to warrant the Board's attention, please raise it to any Board member. Board meetings are held once a month and all CCA members are welcome to attend. The date and location of each Board meeting will be included in the Center's monthly newsletter and posted on the monitor as you enter the building.

Messages for Staff/Changes in Schedule

Please inform the staff in your child's classroom of any change in your work schedule or telephone contact number for the day as it is imperative that we have an accurate emergency phone number if you plan to be at an alternate location for the day.

Absence from the Center

Please call the Center office at 301-975-2152 or email to nistchld@nist.gov if your child is going to be absent from the Center. A phone call or email helps us in food preparation, staffing and planning the activities for the day.

Parent Information Board

Items of interest to parents are posted on the parent information bulletin board located in the hallway to the left as you enter the building and within each classroom. Please take the time to check the board periodically.

Visiting the Center

You are always welcome here! We encourage you to visit the Center and participate in activities with your child as often as your schedule permits. We encourage you to have lunch with your child as often as possible. Children love sharing their family with their friends. Please check with your child's

teacher for the best time to come. The kindergarten program is a non-public school and as such it is necessary to arrange visits in advance to avoid disrupting the educational day of the students.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

At the NIST CCC, ongoing communication between families and staff contribute to the success of our program. Official parent-teacher conferences are offered twice a year. Our preschool staff schedule phone conferences in the fall to discuss the child's progress and meet face-to-face with parents in the spring. The kindergarten staff offers face-to-face conferences in the fall and spring to discuss the child's progress. The infant/toddler staff offers conferences regularly, at least twice a year. Conferences are announced in the classroom monthly newsletter and with a sign-up sheet posted in each classroom. Parents are asked to sign beside a time that is convenient for you on the posted schedule. Any staff member will be happy to meet with parents at other times throughout the year, whenever the need arises. Speak to your child's teacher or the director to arrange to meet in person or talk by phone at a mutually convenient time.

Newsletters

Newsletters are published monthly to keep you informed of current events and issues at the NIST Child Care Center. The current center newsletter can be found on the Parent News Board or on the parent website <http://parents/nistkids.org>. Individual classrooms distribute weekly or monthly newsletters with curriculum information and specific items of interest to their room. These newsletters are your link to the program. Please read them carefully to keep updated on Classroom and Center happenings.

Transportation/Field Trips

Field trips are planned throughout the year to enrich the learning that occurs in our Center. Parents will be notified of all upcoming field trips and asked to sign a permission slip allowing your child's participation. At times you will be assessed a nominal fee for admission and transportation. All children in attendance at school the day of the field trip are expected to participate. No alternate care is available for a child whose parents elect not to have him/her participate. All staff is needed on field trips in order to maintain proper staff-child ratios.

So as not to penalize those children arriving on time and to maximize the time allotted for field trips, transportation will not wait for late arrivals and will leave promptly at the designated time. In the event that a child misses the transportation, parents may choose the option of transporting their child to the field trip location. Otherwise, parents are responsible for their child's care until the group returns from the field trip.

The Center requests that all children wear a "NIST Child Care Center" T-shirt while on field trips. T-shirts may be purchased from the Director/Assistant Directors. These shirts help staff and parent volunteers easily identify children from our group especially when visiting a location where many other additional children may be in attendance.

The children will be transported in the Center bus. Each child will be required to wear a seat belt or the integrated child restraints depending on their weight and height. There may be occasions when parents are needed to accompany their child's class on an outing and possibly transport themselves or their child in their car. Your child will always travel in the Center bus if you are not able to go on the trip.

Summer Specials

A variety of weekly programs are arranged at the Center during the summer months for the preschool children and younger to enjoy. These programs are intended to enrich our program and may include puppet shows, animal shows, musicians, etc. A one-time nominal fee per summer will be charged to support these specials.

Daily Activities

Information about your child's day is shared with parents in a variety of ways. Our infants, toddlers and 2's have individual daily reports sent home. For preschoolers (3 and 4 year olds), your child's day is posted in the classroom. Some classrooms reach out to parents using our classroom email lists as well. Please take the time to read the entire note. Our kindergarten class has a weekly newsletter that discusses the weekly activities and events. Please take the time to read the daily or weekly newsletter since it will enable you to more easily discuss the day's events with your child.

Fundraising/Donations

Throughout the year the NIST Child Care Association sponsors several fundraising activities/events in which parents are encouraged to participate. Donations directly to the Center are always appreciated and are tax-deductible. If you prefer, donations can be made at <http://www.razoo.com/>. All support is welcome, but does not alter or influence your child's placement in the CCC.

Parents as Center Volunteers

There are many wonderful ways for parents to participate in the life of the NIST CCC. Parents may occasionally be asked to donate their time and talents to assist in the maintenance of the child care facility and in other ways such as serving on a committee, participating on field trips, etc. We encourage all parents to participate in some way to help maintain the high quality of the Center and its programs but know that participation is strictly voluntary, and does not alter or influence your child's placement in the CCC. This is your Center, too. Please make the most of it!

APPENDIX A: SCHEDULE OF FEES (as of March 2016)

Registration Processing Fee (initial, one-time)	\$50.00
Deposit (initial, one-time).....	\$200.00
Tuition (every two weeks).....	See website or Parents News Board
Returned Check or Insufficient Funds (each occurrence)	\$25.00
Late Tuition Checks (per workday late)	\$5.00
Late Pick-up (first 5 minutes after 6:00pm EST, or any portion thereof)	\$15.00
Late Pick-up (every minute after 6:05pm EST)	\$1.00
Early Closing (first 5 minutes after official closing time, or any portion thereof)	\$15.00
Early Closing (every minute after the first 5 minutes after official closing time).....	\$1.00
CCA membership (annual)	\$50.00
Field Trips (as scheduled).....	varies
Transportation (as scheduled).....	varies
Summer Specials (each Spring).....	varies
T-shirts.....	see CCC Director
Tax Deductible Donations	see CCC Director
Summer Camp Activity Fee (Paid each Winter per session)	Published in Winter
Summer Camp Tuition (per session)	Published in Winter

APPENDIX B: OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF BY CCC FAMILIES

We ask that you keep your relationships with teachers on a professional basis. You are discouraged from utilizing teachers for out-of-Center child care. However, if you ask staff to work as a babysitter while they are employed, please know this is an entirely separate arrangement than your child's enrollment at the Center. Our liability or workers compensation insurance does not cover staff off premises. In addition, our background research and on-the-job observations do not cover any work done outside the Center. Also, the job demands are high and the potential for conflict of interest exists.